The Female Tatler.

Written by a Society of Ladies.

Ridentem dicere verum quid vetat ?

From **Friday** January 27, to **Monday** January 30, 1710.

Emilia's Day.

From my SCRUTORE.

SOPHRONIA may go on her formal way, and entertain the Old and the Insipid, for my part I am one of them that withdrew upon her Ridiculous Speech, at this time of Day especially, when she set up for her being Moral and Inoffensive: If she has a Bent that way, e'en let her establish her Fame by Railing, and then she may do what she pleases: The mighty Genius of the Age, who now appears all that firm Morality and chearful Virtue can wish him, recommended himself to the taste of the Town by Dear Encourag'd Scandal, he might have been Witty to the Conflagration before the *Beau-mond* had been Sixpence the Wiser for his *Lucubrations*; but he Artfully brib'd the Many with necessary Malice, and having gain'd his Point, is now at leisure to Charm the Few with Thought and Eloquence. I have made trial of this Candid Temper in Human kind, by describing to the mix'd Audience at a Coquet's Visiting-Day, the graceful Airs of *Artemisa*, whose every Motion shakes the Lover's Heart, or repeating the Virtues of *Urania*, whom even the Bad Commend; and I have observ'd it to interrupt all their Conversation, and reduce them to enquire what it was a Clock, and compare their Watches to see how divided they were in the account of Time: Some have got up to examine Family Pictures, others it has forc'd to make their *Exit* a Minute and Three Seconds at least before they design'd it, but if dispos'd to oblige, I have discover'd some unsuspected Amour, question'd some shining Virtue, or ridicul'd some reigning Toast; then as if all the Sences had been chang'd to Hearing, they have gather'd round me with deep Attention, and mark'd my Stops with Applauding Smiles. Lady *Hearsay* has invited me to *Bohee* in a Morning, and Lady *Rural* to a Family Dinner; Mrs. *Sanguin* to taste her Cordial, Lady *Thrifty* has intreated my Company to the *Park*, and Mrs *Thoughtless* to the Puppet Show, and all have prais'd my Manners and approv'd my Wit. Well! they have cry'd, *Emilia* is certainly the most engaging Company, she reconciles one to the Fatigues of Life, and even in the hurry of a Visit we improve by her. Now, who alive wou'd forfeit all this, only to indulge themselves in an awkard way of speaking well of People behind their Backs; Were good Nature in Fashion I cou'd be as Genteel as another, But as it is my Easy Chair shall be at Liberty for a Writing Critick, a Journey-man Poet, and a homely Coquet, Three Mortals that Falshood itself dares not accuse of speaking well of any body, their Reputations being establish'd by never changing Truth, beyond the reach of Suspicion.—— I had no sooner laid down my Pen, but in came *Melanthe* in her usual precipitate way; my Dear, said she, I am infinitely glad to find you at Home, I shou'd have been the most disappointed of Wretches, had I miss'd of you; what News my Dear Intelligence then, said I; nay, not for that, answer'd *Melanthe*, moving forward to the great Glass, I'll but mend this Patch and tell you: *Belinda*, the Gay, the Lovely, the Ador'd *Belinda*—— Monstrous! How I look to Day.—— She that reign'd in every Heart, the wonder of our Sex and the wish of Mankind.—— My Dear, how do you like my Handkerchief; don't you allow that Lemon helps my Complexion more than Cherry.—— She that Sung and Play'd, Danc'd, and Talk'd, and Writ, and almost Distracted us with her Perfections, is now so Lost a Thing, that I can scarce forbear pittying the Poor Creature; I call'd upon her just now, and found her Croud of Admirers vanish'd: She Sat pensive at her Table, where she had Writ these Lines.

Attend ye Fair who Boast of Wit and Youth,
And learn from me this Melancholy Truth:
'Tis fruitless all what you so highly Prize,
Depend not on your Shape, your Voice, your Eyes,
All Charms but Wealth can sordid Man despise.

Well! I have stay'd an Age with you; but you have not look'd upon my Muffs, 'tis wonderfully becoming this new way of wearing one upon each Arm; they are as graceful as Bracelets, and but very little broader; I fancy they'll keep in all Summer, and that will be New and *French. Adieu*; and will you tell me nothing else my Dear, said I, O! I am so afraid that one hideous Man or other will come up, that I have not Power to Sit down; Now I think on't, when did you see *Jacky*, I'll venture to enquire after him as the most tollerable of his kind; he has good Breeding enough to carry it smooth to those he hates, and Indifferency sufficient to keep him from being troublesome to those he Loves: He ever expresses himself in that lucky way between Jest and Earnest, which has this advantage over all other Phrase, that it gives you leave to understand and apply it as best pleases the present Humour you are in. Thus far more in his Praise, he has absolutely the best Air in picking his Teeth and shutting his Snuff Box, of any Mortal that never Travell'd.—— Here I was going to interrupt her, but she prevented me; I know *Emilia* what you are going to say by your Smiling, but he's no more to me than an Old Lampoon: Where am I, sure 'tis all Inchantment when I'm with you, I am going to the Grotesque Beauty that came to

Town

Town the other Day with her Maiden Aunt, and wanted to see St *Paul's*, the *Tower* and the *Abbey*, tho she begins to be asham'd of the barbarous Ignorance she has been bred up in, and I have great hopes I shall hear her Commend Plays, distinguish Players, and see her make a Figure at your Tea-Table; I'll call again the first Moment I can disingage my self; Good *Madam* no Ceremony. Here she disappear'd, and the Boy brought me in the following Letter.

To EMILIA.

'FROM this time you will know me for your Friend, since I put it in your Power to prevent 'the oddest Catastrophe that ever Ignorance occasion'd, 'Love; waving all other pretences, I have the Repu- 'tation of being a Fortune, and that has drawn me a 'large Retinue of Ogling, Sighing, Whining, Lying 'Things, commonly known by the assum'd Titles of 'Eternal, Eager, Despairing Lovers: One of them deep 'Red in Romance, has been at the Expence of many 'Follies to Disguize his better Reasons; he has accus'd 'his Innocent Destiny, my Imaginary Charms, and 'arraign'd every Power above and below; But the 'right, dear Irresistable Gold. He has sent me one A- 'crostick, two Anagrams, and many Epistles, in which 'he has gone thro' the Experienc'd Regiment of Poe- 'try, the disinterested Passion, the distant Hope, the 'humble Request, the importunate Perseverence, and 'the Voluntary Despair, and I wou'd not have him 'go off a Loser. He has taken it into his Head of late 'to pass the Night in Amorous Meditations under my 'Window, often looking up with steddy Regard and 'suitable Ejaculations no doubt, and by the unluckest 'Accident imaginable, my Father has observ'd him: 'My Father, who never understood these Methods, but 'Married out of pure Complyance to his Honour'd 'Parents, and does not know Love tho' he shou'd meet 'him in a full Light, alas! misled by doubtful Ap- 'pearances, he has mistaken him for a Gentleman 'Thief, and accordingly taken Measures to have him 'secur'd the next time he Loyters there at that suspi- 'cious Hour. I had no way left but this to advise 'him of the Danger he was threatned with; for tho' 'he has been very Communicative as to State of his 'Heart, in that of his Abode and Circumstances, he 'has shown a strict Discretion, and let me see he 'can keep a Secret when there are such pressing Reasons 'he shou'd. The first opportunity I shall convey his 'Ingenious Papers to your Hands, where he may call 'for them at Leisure; they may serve another time with 'better Success. But shou'd I have suffer'd Matters to 'come to that extremity, and produc'd them as Proofs 'of his Honour, what had acquitted him had con- 'demn'd me, and my Father's Country House had 'been my Prison during Life; from whence nor Prose 'nor Verse could have retriev'd me from Savage Gar- 'dens, &c.

This wou'd have been of unhappy Consequence to the Assiduous, and by the way may serve for a warning to all Night Adventurers, a sort of Lovers that have been frequently observ'd about *July* and *August*, but seldom or never taken at this Season of the Year: A Man must be strangely unprovided of an Answer, that is suppriz'd in the middle of a fine Simile or a soft Umbraiding, and examined in the Severe Tone and harsh Terms of a Constable; an unhappy Byas to his Customary way of Expression wou'd undo him, the least slip of the Tongue concerning Silent Night, blazing Fires and certain Death, wou'd all be taken in a wrong Sense, and be understood as relating to Robbery and Murder. I shall take Care to give the Gentleman Notice as soon as the Manuscripts are in my possession.

*** *It is earnestly desired, that on the reading of this, Mr* Joke, *the Curate, will lay down his Pipe and repair to his Study; if the Lock be rusty, as 'tis possible it may, for want of Use, let him send for a Smith, and provide himself with a little Oyl for the future; for it is held necessary for many Reasons, Spiritual and Temporal, that he should confine himself to sit there for the space of one Hour, at least every Month, and if he continues still his aversion to the Inside, yet let him venture so near as to brush the Cobwebs from the Outside of Learning.*

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